British Nordic Development Squad 2010-11 Season

Although the Winter Olympic Games were the highlight of the 2009-10 season, every effort was made to ensure that we continued to support and develop younger skiers. As we moved into 2010-11 priorities for the squad were agreed as:

- Support athletes born in 1993-94 in achieving selection and optimising performance in European Youth Olympics Winter Festival ("EYO Group")
- Provide coaching, development and some racing opportunities for younger and less experienced members of the squad (("Development Group") including liaison with clubs in England and Wales to identify and nurture younger talent.

In addition, long term objectives for the elite skiers include:

- Development of a world class programme
- Projecting athletes on a pathway to medals.

The future of the programme depends on the availability of good coaches so the squad continues to try and attract and develop new coaches.

The **summer 2010** programme was successful in meeting these objectives. Statistics for the summer programme are as follows:

Camps held	11
Camp days	44
Contributing coaches	10
Coach days	102
Participating athletes	32
Athlete days	412

- 9 new members were recruited into the Development squad, including 4 from England and Wales
- Head Coach Roy Young attended two weekend sessions with London clubs to encourage participation from younger athletes outside Scotland
- All squad members participated in skills development and fitness training and had the opportunity to participate in roller ski races in England (Wessex, Lancaster, Durham) as well as in Scotland (Huntly, Aviemore, Glenmore).
- A camp was run at the Snow Tunnel in Torsby, Sweden in October to give EYO group athletes early season on-snow training.
- Several camps included skiers from all groups, so that developing skiers had the opportunity to mix with and learn from the elite skiers.
- New coaches assisted with our summer camps.

The vehicle supported by the Skiers Trust proved invaluable in enabling summer camps to involve a variety of locations and activities on a cost effective basis.

The summer programme was summarised for the BNDS website:
For the older skiers, who concentrate on the winter race season, summer is the time for building up strength and endurance with running, gym work, core strength and biking as well as roller skiing. For the development group the emphasis is on general fitness as well as improving technique through roller skiing. And in amongst the training the British Roller Ski Series provides opportunities for some competitive racing.

April was "rest month" for skiers and coaches alike with no training plans and a chance for bodies and brains to recover. Many of those who had spent the whole winter on the race circuit had fun skiing off track, biking, climbing, swimming and

generally relaxing. Training started again in May with a weekend camp for the whole squad coinciding with the BNDS Annual General Meeting. This was a chance for everyone to get together, meet the coaches, grill the committee and plan an overview for the coming year. The World and EYO groups had a short camp in early July when they discussed in more detail with their coaches what they hope to do in the next race season and their training plans. The main summer camp for the whole squad took place in early August in Nethy Bridge, not far from Aviemore. Time trials on the notorious tight turns on the Glenmore roller ski track were challenging for some of the new recruits to the squad but this had the benefit of making the next day's trials up the Cairngorm ski road seem easy in comparison!

Through the summer many of the squad raced in the British Roller Ski race series held at various venues throughout the UK. These produced good races between squad members and also against British club skiers and skiers from the various Forces biathlon teams. In the senior men's races Andrew Young, Callum Smith and Simon Platt all had wins while in the junior age groups Callum Irvine had a great summer against team-mates Ruaridh Newman and Michael May. The three GB Team women Fi Hughes, Posy Musgrave and Sarah Young seemed to take it in turns to win, Katy Homyer was unbeaten in the girls' U18 group and Lynne Gray and Beth MacLean had a flying start in their first season with the squad. Other squad members showed consistent improvement, including all the new members. Notable only by his absence was Andrew Musgrave who returned from his year in Norway at the end of June and went back there in August, attending the main training camps but missing all the roller ski races. Full race results can be seen on http://www.gb-raceroll.org.uk/

Roller skiing – Development squad

Dry land training – summer camp

As well as the familiar "old" coaches, several new faces have joined the BNDS coaching team this year, amongst them Steve Boyd, Ekaterina Rachel, Felicity Bertram and Brendon Gabriel. Through the summer several young skiers have contacted Head Coach, Roy Young, asking to join the squad. So going into the early winter season the BNDS is looking strong. October will include the regular autumn camp, consisting of a week in Huntly followed by a long weekend in England which will include the final roller ski race of the season in Castle Combe. The EYO group are in Sweden for a week on snow at the Torsby ski tunnel and the World Group are dispersing – some to train in Norway (hopefully soon on snow) and others to university where thy will face the harder challenge of training and studying.

The **winter 2010-11** programme includes:

- 2 race camps for EYO athletes before and after Christmas and a holding camp for one week prior to the European Youth Olympics
- A pre-Christmas on snow camp and participation in the British Championships for Development athletes.
- Race camps for eligible athletes including World Junior and U23 Championships in Otepaa, Estonia and World Championships in Oslo, Norway.

BNDS athletes have so far participated in six winter camps.

- EYO athletes participated in age group races in Savalan, Norway in December while elite athletes competed in Senior and 18/19 age group races at the same venue. Three male and one female athletes were successful in selection races and have been recommended for participation in the European Youth Olympics.
- 8 Development Group athletes with two coaches participated in the on snow camp in Sjusjoen, Norway prior to Christmas. Sjusjoen was selected because of the reliable snow cover – unfortunately this year there has been an unusual dearth of snow but a successful camp was held utilising available man-made snow in the Natrudstilen stadium on some occasions. (Unfortunately it has just been necessary to cancel the BNDS camp for the British Championships in Rupholding- school exams, then late withdrawals due to illness and injury have made this camp unviable, but it is anticipated that some athletes will still be able to attend with their clubs).
- Highlights of the elite season so far include the best FIS points ever scored by a British male athlete and by a British female athlete.

The squad vehicle has been in regular use in Scandinavia to support camps from the Snow Tunnel through to Christmas and has been invaluable in managing cost and making the programmes accessible to all athletes.

Squad athletes in action in Savalan – December 2010

Financial information- Skiers Trust provide a grant towards the lease of a minibus. The monthly cost of the lease, which was obtained through SSGB, is £383.15. The balance of the cost is raised by BNDS fundraising. With the demise of SSGB we had to arrange further lease of the vehicle to be reassigned to BSS, Insurance has now also been arranged for us by BSS. To the start of the winter season the vehicle had travelled 34,000 miles – every mile in support of the nordic skiing programme.

A final report on 2010-11, including full report on winter activities, will be produced at the end of the season.